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SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY East Germany

REPORT

TOPIC Drewitz Airfield

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EVALUATION

PLACE OBTAINED

50X1-HUM

DATE OF CONTENT

DATE OBTAINED

DATE PREPARED 16 October 1953

REFERENCES

PAGES 4 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

1.

Unit 302 was a ground personnel battalion. The exact designation of the unit was not known. The battalion included an airfield company with a personnel strength of 50 men, a motor transport company of 30 men, a guard company of 125 men, a POL section of 20 men and a supply detail of 20 men each, and the headquarters with a personnel strength of 25 men. The total strength of the unit, including officers, was estimated at 300 men. The guard company was composed of three platoons with three squads to each platoon. 1

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2. Between August 1952 and 20 May 1953, the unit was stationed at Installation II in Kamenz, from where it was transferred to Drewitz airfield, shortly before or around the same time as the fighter regiment headquarters moved from Kamenz to Drewitz. In early April 1953, the flying personnel of the unit were temporarily transferred to Dresden-Klotzsche. After a four-week furlough they were also to be transferred to Drewitz.

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The unit was billeted in temporary and permanent buildings at the northwestern border of the field.<sup>2</sup>

3. Between early and mid-June 1953, three MiG-15s and two two-seater Yak-11s were stationed at the field. The aircraft were flown and serviced only by Soviet personnel. Only local flying to test the airfield was conducted. The motor park of Unit 302 included 20 to 25 6-ton IFA H 6 type trucks, 10 3-ton IFA H 3 trucks, three fuel trucks with trailers, 2 ambulances and an undetermined number of IFA Z 3 tractors.

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4. The officers of Unit 302 included Captain Richter (fnu), commanding officer, Captain Keil (fnu), chief of staff, Lieutenant Hoffmann (fnu), deputy chief of staff, Lieutenant Nikisch, political officer, Lieutenant Markus (fnu), SED secretary, Sub Lieutenant Gockel (fnu), FDJ secretary, Lieutenant Kroll (fnu), commanding officer of the guard company, Lieutenant Stoelzel (fnu), political officer of the guard company, Lieutenant Wistuba (fnu), deputy political officer, Lieutenant Riehn (fnu), chief 1st Platoon, Lieutenant Giese, (fnu), chief 2nd Platoon, Lieutenant Huebner (fnu), chief 3rd Platoon, Lieutenant Unger (fnu), chief airfield company, Lieutenant Koehler (fnu), political officer of the airfield company, Sub-Lieutenant Gentsch (fnu), platoon commander. Captain Ziehres (fnu) was commander of the air regiment, and Captain Zehl (fnu) who was no aviator and formerly was chief of staff of the air regiment was chief of Installation II at Kamenz. Attached to the unit were two Soviet advisors, a lieutenant colonel and a major; both wore VFL uniforms. 4

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6. The concrete runway at Drewitz airfield was two to three kilometers long and 80 meters wide. A taxiway covered with steel matting was running parallel to the runway and was connected to its middle section by a connecting strip. \* Concrete lanes branched off at right angles from the triangular concrete aprons at both ends of the runway. Some of the runway matting from the former improvised runway at Kamenz had been shipped to Drewitz. A railroad connection was being laid from the Cottbus-Guben railroad line to the fuel depot. 6

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7. The western border of Drewitz airfield was about one kilometer east of a line running from the Jaenschwalde railroad station to Drewitz; its southern border was about 30 meters north of the Cottbus-Guben railroad line. On 11 June 1953, the runways and hangars were completed except for their gates. Painters and plumbers were working in the barracks and in the flight control building which had two glass towers, about 18 meters high, and was located on the southeastern boundary of the field. The excavations for the field depot were completed. The number of civilian laborers at the field had been reduced from about 3,000 to about 900, while the number of political prisoners was increased from about 1,500 to 1,800. The civilian construction workers were billeted in the "Hochbau" camp south of the railroad line which consisted of six one-story brick buildings and 17 temporary wooden buildings. Political prisoners lived in a tent camp surrounded by a barbed wire fence east of the "Hochbau" Camp. Further billets were in the "Tieftau" Camp, northwest of the field.
8. After mid-April 1953, about 400 men of the VFL were transferred from Kamenz to Drewitz. They did only guard and labor duty.
9. Two police details, each of about 60 men, were stationed at the Hochbau and Tieftau camps. Patrols were accompanied by dogs. In the entire area of the field, the workers were subject to spot checks for their work passes which they were supposed to carry while being at the field.
10. On the morning of 1 May 1953, when all the workers were assembled for the May Day demonstration at the Tieftau Camp, a fire broke out in a machine shop at the eastern border of the field. Although the entire work force hurried to the scene, the machine shop burned down and another fire started in an office at the Tieftau Camp. While the workers were extinguishing

\* It had the same length as the runway and was more than six meters wide.

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the fire in the office, the cement shop at the eastern border of the field started burning. Six Diesel and steam locomotives of the narrow-gauge field railroad line and the oil reserves were destroyed in the machine shop, as well as documents and blueprints in the office, and the drying installation in the cement shop. This fire delayed construction work at the field one week. 7

11. On 12 July, no aircraft or flying activity were observed at Drewitz airfield. [redacted] during the preceding days take-offs by single engine monoplanes were frequently observed. All roads leading to the area of the airfield were blocked. In the west the barbed wire fence around the airfield started about 250 meters east of the Drewitz-Jaenschwalde road, and in the south the fence was about 250 meters south of the Cottbus-Guben railroad line. A fenced-in camp with civilian prisoners working at the field was located south of the railroad line.

12. On 23 July, above-ground construction work at Drewitz airfield was almost completed, while work was continued on underground constructions, however, at a slightly reduced speed. The airfield was guarded by numerous KVP sentries. From the fact that the Reichsbahn had cancelled the plan to enlarge the Jaenschwalde railroad station, [redacted] construction work at the field would be completed soon. 7 50X1-HUM

13. At about 10:30 a.m. on 27 August, five single-engine monoplanes took off from the field. The aircraft were painted olive-drab [redacted] 50X1-HUM  
[redacted] The landing of these aircraft was not observed. Several VPL soldiers were observed in the village of Drewitz. Truck [redacted] was seen in the vicinity of the field. On 4 September, no air activity was observed at the field. On 15 September, there was no flying at the field until 6 p.m. except for the landing of two swept back jet fighters at 1:40 p.m. Soldiers of the VPL and of the Soviet air force were seen in the village of Drewitz. [redacted] 50X1-HUM

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14. A branch line leading to the north branched off from the Cottbus-Guben railroad line at kilometer marker 197.6. About 30 meters east of this point, the fence turned to the north. Kilometer marker 192.7 is located close to the Jaenschwalde railroad station. A road leading to the north in the direction of the airfield was under construction near kilometer marker 195.3. Five new four-story apartment houses were located west of the spur track, about 1,500 meters east of the road under construction. They were occupied by VPL on 15 September. A concrete road under construction led from the apartment houses to kilometer marker 195.3, about one kilometer east of the point where the barbed-wire fence turned off from the railroad line to the north. Another road was under construction from Jaenschwalde toward the field. Temporary quartering buildings for the workers were located outside of the fenced-in area, next to this road, north of the railroad line. Several single story brick buildings were located about 300 meters east of the Jaenschwalde settlement, south of the railroad line. 7

15. At about 6:30 p.m. on 29 August, no flying activity was observed at Drewitz airfield. Between 12:30 and 5:30 p.m. on 3 September, individual jet fighters started and landed at the field. 8

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1. [ ] Comment. A strength of about 300 men as stated for the airfield supply battalion [ ]  
The POL and supply sections are probably subordinate to the battalion headquarters.

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2. [ ]

3. [ ] Comment. These aircraft probably belonged to the Soviet VPL training regiment. The testing of the field by jet aircraft indicates that it had been planned to train VPL pilots in jet aircraft.

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4. [ ] Comment. Lieutenant Hoffmann (fnu), Lieutenant Markus, Sub Lieutenant Gockel (fnu), Lieutenant Wistuba (fnu) and Lieutenant Kochler are reported for the first time. Captain Zieros (fnu) was previously [ ] commanding officer of the 602d Air Regiment. [ ]

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6. [ ] Comment. [ ] the runway at Drewitz airfield is 2,500 meters long and 80 meters wide. The steel-matting surface of the taxiway is reported for the first time.

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7. [ ] Comment. [ ] It may be assumed that two hangars were constructed. [ ]

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8. [ ] Comment. [ ] by 30 August 1953, the units of the VPL had once again received about 30 conventional training aircraft. It is assumed that some of these aircraft are stationed at Drewitz. The reported jet aircraft were probably flown by Soviet pilots.

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